

**Minnesota Council on Transportation Access
Meeting Minutes**

Wednesday, October 25, 2017

Members Present

Chair – Tim Henkel, Minnesota Department of Transportation
Jon Kelly, Minnesota Department of Commerce (via phone)
Ronald Quade II, Minnesota Department of Veterans Affairs (via phone)
Tim Sexton, Minnesota Department of Transportation
Gerri Sutton, Metropolitan Council
Harlan Tardy, Minnesota Board on Aging (via phone)
Claire Wilson, Minnesota Department of Human Services

Members Absent

Peter Brickwedde, Minnesota Department of Commerce (Jon Kelly served as proxy)
Tiffany Collins, Minnesota Public Transit Association
Tim Held, Minnesota Department of Health
Stewart McMullan, Minnesota Department of Management and Budget
Thant Pearson, Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development
Sharon Peck, Minnesota Department of Education
Vice-Chair – Joan Willshire, Minnesota State Council on Disability

Others Present

Minnesota Department of Transportation:

- Kristie Billiar, ADA Program and Policy
- Jake Rueter, Office of Transit
- Noel Shughart, Office of Transit
- Sue Siemers, Office of Transit (via phone)

University of Minnesota:

- Kaydee Kirk, Center for Transportation Studies
- Arlene Mathison, Center for Transportation Studies

Heidi Corcoran, Dakota County (via phone)

Tim Kirchoff, Anoka County

Kim Pettman, Transit Advocate (via phone)

Kjensmo Walker

Tim Weltcin, Prime West Health (via phone)

Call to order and introductions

Henkel called to order the October meeting of the Minnesota Council on Transportation Access at 1:05 PM on October 25, 2017 at the MnDOT Central Office, St. Paul, MN.

Review and approval of agenda

Sutton made a motion to approve the agenda; the motion was seconded by Wilson and then it was unanimously **approved**.

Review and approval of 9/27/17 meeting minutes

Members requested the minutes be modified to list that Quade joined the September meeting via phone and that Pettman's title be listed as Transit Advocate. Tardy moved to approve the 9/27/2017 MCOTA meeting minutes with these revisions; the motion was seconded by Wilson and it was then unanimously **approved**.

MCOTA research study, Public Sector Uses of Transportation Network Companies (TNCs), final report

Members reviewed the proposed language to add to the abstract and to the report disclaimer. Mathison shared that the researchers were comfortable with the language. Key discussion points:

- Shughart added that there has been numerous recent discussions around disability with respect to TNCs. There is the perspective of mandating the ADA law vs. carrying out the spirit of the law. There are issues around proving the ability of TNCs to provide on-demand service for persons with disabilities; this needs to be proven through an audit/evaluation (traditionally done by the FTA).
- It is not known if persons with disabilities were included in the analysis of the case studies; the data cannot prove this. The Council would like to make this fact clear to the reader. The group discussed adding language to the abstract to say that the study did not specifically assess persons with disabilities, a limitation of the study.
- It was suggested to strike the text “MCOTA recommends that....” In the disclaimer on the first page.
- Members asked if the proposed language should instead be addressed in the body of the report with lessons learned. The ideas in the proposed language were not part of the original scope of the research.
- Ultimately the group decided to revise the abstract language to address the study’s limitation and remove the disclaimer completely.

Sutton moved to modify the abstract to address the limitations of this study, Sexton seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously **approved**.

Sutton moved to release the report as amended, seconded by Wilson. The motion was unanimously **approved**.

Next stakeholder communication

Mathison provided an overview of the communication handout. The October communication includes a highlight on Jerry Zhao’s recent research.

Sutton suggested that some of the TNC language in this communication could be used in the revised abstract for the TNC report; members agreed.

Sexton requested to include additional language on the connection between the RTCCs and MCOTA to make the connection clear. Siemers added that MCOTA serves as the statewide body providing ongoing guidance for the RTCCs. Henkel added that MCOTA, as it is written in law, needs to ensure and further the coordination of transit. Olmstead calls for a statewide rollout of the RTCCs. With this mandate, how does MCOTA ensure this happens and in a timely manner? Members decided that language will be added on the connection between the RTCCs and MCOTA. Also, a weblink to the RTCC information that is housed on the MCOTA website will be added to the communication.

Tardy moved to approve the communication with these changes, seconded by Sexton. The motion was unanimously **approved**.

Review and discuss draft annual report

Mathison provided an overview of the draft annual report. Member feedback and changes included the following:

- The MnDOT logo and a cover photo will be added to the final report. The sentence in the summary on the “range” will be deleted.
- The sentence on page 11 will be modified to avoid using the word “may.” Instead something like “MCOTA will consider introducing.....” could be used.

- The public private TNC language will be the same in the report as in the annual report.
- Since this year's joint meetings between the state agencies included a broad array of topics, not just the topic of the RTCCs, this information under another section.
- The connection between the RTCCs and MCOTA, as well as the RTCC rollout phases, will be made more clear.
- Billiar will review the Olmstead section and will provide any edits to Mathison.

It was noted that the draft is due November 1 to MnDOT's Office of Communications for review to ensure the report meets the legislative requirements. This agenda item will be added to the next MCOTA meeting. Shughart added that the final report will be submitted in December.

Follow-up on disability awareness/sensitivity training

Tardy, Shughart, and Willshire will work offline to organize a disability awareness training. They will also connect with Pettman.

It was shared that some of MnDOT's pedestrian safety work has involved awareness and sensitivity regarding persons with disabilities. Walker noted that accessibility walks have been conducted; this includes taking wheelchair out on a field walk.

Connecting with the Disabilities Services Office at DHS was suggested. Wilson shared that a recent DHS micro and macro aggressions training was very beneficial for their staff.

Pettman would like the MCOTA training to be experiential. Could it be added to the beginning or end of an existing MCOTA meeting and could it involve a paratransit vehicle and a field walk?

Update on volunteer driver program reimbursement committee

Collins has reached out the MTA and with the MN Council of Nonprofits to move forward to bring in legislative and technical experts for the volunteer driver reimbursement efforts. It is better for a local provider/agency to be spearheading this work vs. a state agency. The goal is to change the 14 cent/mile reimbursement rate for volunteer drivers, potentially up to the business rate. The group will be meeting in again mid-November. Shughart and Willshire are also involved.

Agency updates

- Regional Transportation Coordinating Councils application: Since the RTCC application was released, many have contacted Siemers about their interest and planning to attend the November 9 workshop. The interest level has exceeded expectations. Outreach conducted for the application has been effective. Applications are due March 31 and July 1 is the start date to begin the 12-month plan.
- Olmstead: Billiar shared that the subcabinet met in October to update the work plan and there was not much change to the plan. The work plan is out for public comment through November. They are not anticipating any changes to the transportation section of the overall Olmstead Plan. Billiar also shared that a survey will be conducted over the next two years in small and large urban areas around the state to see how many people identify as a person with a disability.
- Greater Minnesota Transit Investment Plan: Shughart shared that in early spring 2018 MnDOT could solicit requests for unmet transit needs in greater Minnesota. There is \$23 million in funding available. Projects selected would align with the overall MnDOT plan. Grant funding is for 2 years. At the end of the two years, there will be a match required: 80/20 in urban areas and 85/15 in rural areas.

Public comments

Pettman shared the following:

- It is helpful for agency staff to anticipate and be proactive in thinking about disabilities and older adults in all aspects of their work, and also intentionally engage/invite persons with disabilities into these conversations/meetings (for example, issues around TNCs). Need to think of issues from different points of view.
- Many do not understand MCOTA and Olmstead. Can MCOTA reach out to cities and counties to share why they should care about Olmstead? Olmstead affects funding.
- Regarding the MCOTA website and communications, can a graphic be made that shows the agency/industry connections?
- Disability sensitivity training is important.
- Billiar noted that she will carry Pettman’s concerns to Olmstead Implementation Office (OIO).

Adjourn

Sutton made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Wilson. The motion was unanimously **approved**. The meeting ended at 2:38 p.m.

2018 meetings, 1:00-3:30pm MnDOT Central Office:

- Wednesday, January 24
- Wednesday, February 28
- Wednesday, March 28
- Wednesday, April 25
- Wednesday, May 23
- Wednesday, June 27
- Wednesday, July 25
- Wednesday, August 22
- Wednesday, September 26
- Wednesday, October 24
- Wednesday, November 28
- Wednesday, December 19 (3rd Wednesday of month)

Future agenda items:

Public/Private Partnership MTM-Timber Trails Transit

Standing agenda items:

Review and approve agenda
Review and approve meeting minutes
Monthly communications – review and/or approve
FY18 MCOTA budget update
Agency updates
Public comments